
The Vatican is going green today. It's activating a new solar energy system to power several key buildings. Pope Benedict has already made numerous appeals for the protection of the environment. From Rome Duncan Kennedy reports:

The first building **to get the green go-ahead** is the famous Nervi Hall, next to St Peter's Basilica, where the Pope holds general audiences. 2,400 **solar panels** have been **fixed to** its roof.

The new system will provide the energy needs of the Hall and several surrounding buildings all year round. It'll also allow the 108 acre site of the Vatican City **to cut** its **carbon dioxide emissions** by about 225 tons a year. **The panels are not visible** from below, and officials say the famous Vatican City **skyline**, including St Peter's, will remain **untouched**.

The Vatican plans to install more renewable energy sources to provide 20% of its needs by 2020, **roughly in line with** European Union goals.

Pope Benedict is **a keen environmentalist**. The Vatican has hosted a scientific conference to discuss global warming and climate change. Last year the Pope urged the human race to listen to the voice of the earth or risk destroying the planet.

Duncan Kennedy, BBC News, Rome

Vocabulary and definitions

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| to get the green go-ahead | to receive the approval to become/turn environmentally friendly and stop causing harm to the natural surroundings |
| solar panels | devices that change energy from the sun into electricity |
| fixed to | attached to, permanently placed/positioned on |
| to cut | to reduce, to make smaller |
| carbon dioxide emissions | the production of a heavy colourless and odourless atmospheric gas, known chemically as CO ₂ , which in large amounts can cause harm to the atmosphere |
| The panels are not visible | you cannot see the panels |
| skyline | the panoramic view of a place, especially a city, with all its buildings, bridges, domes and other structures |
| untouched | the same, as it is now |
| roughly in line with | almost the same as, not far from |
| a keen environmentalist | someone who is very interested in the environment and tries hard to protect it from being damaged |

More on this story: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7642811.stm>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/11/081126_vatican_green.shtml